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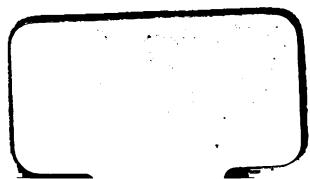
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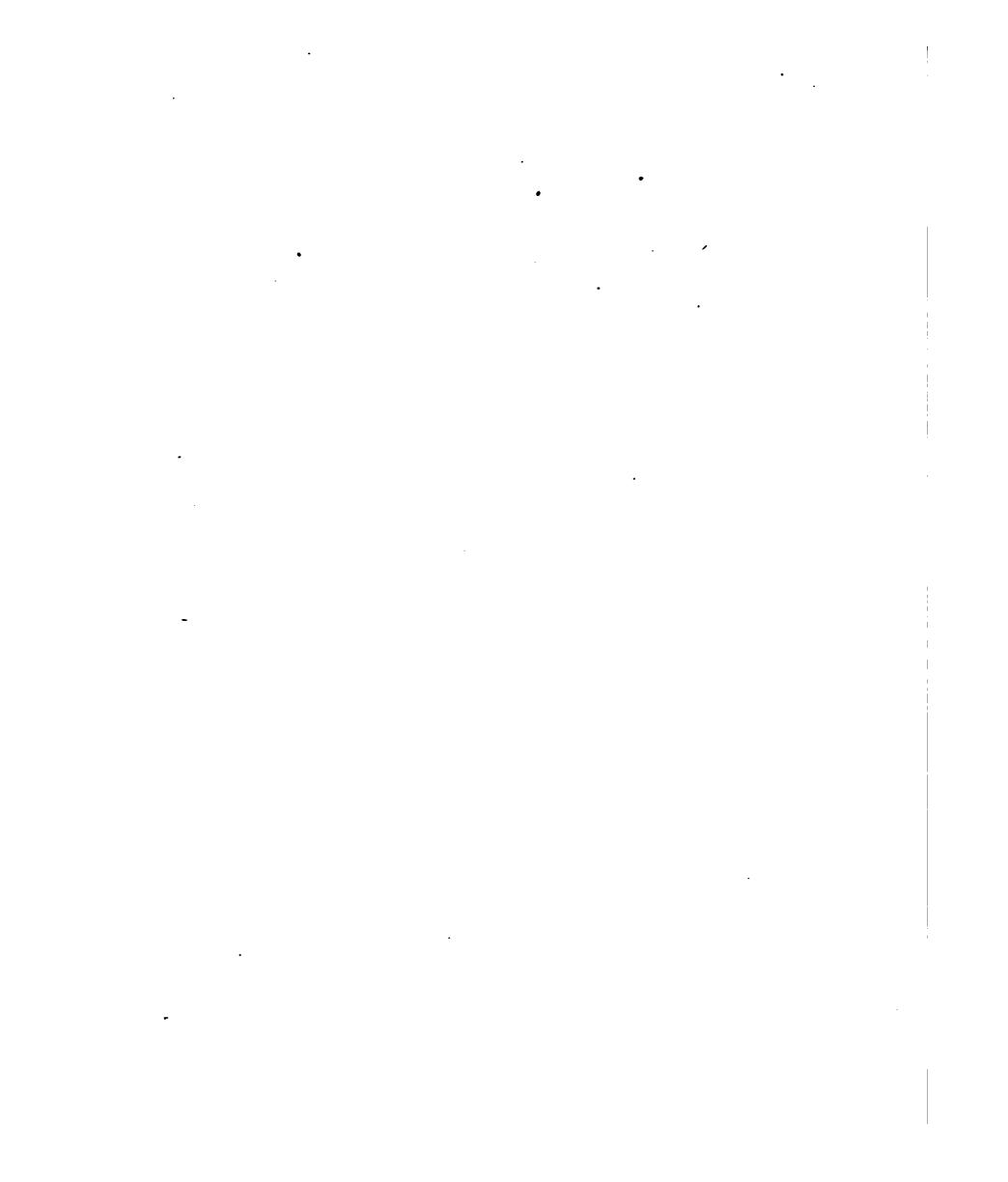
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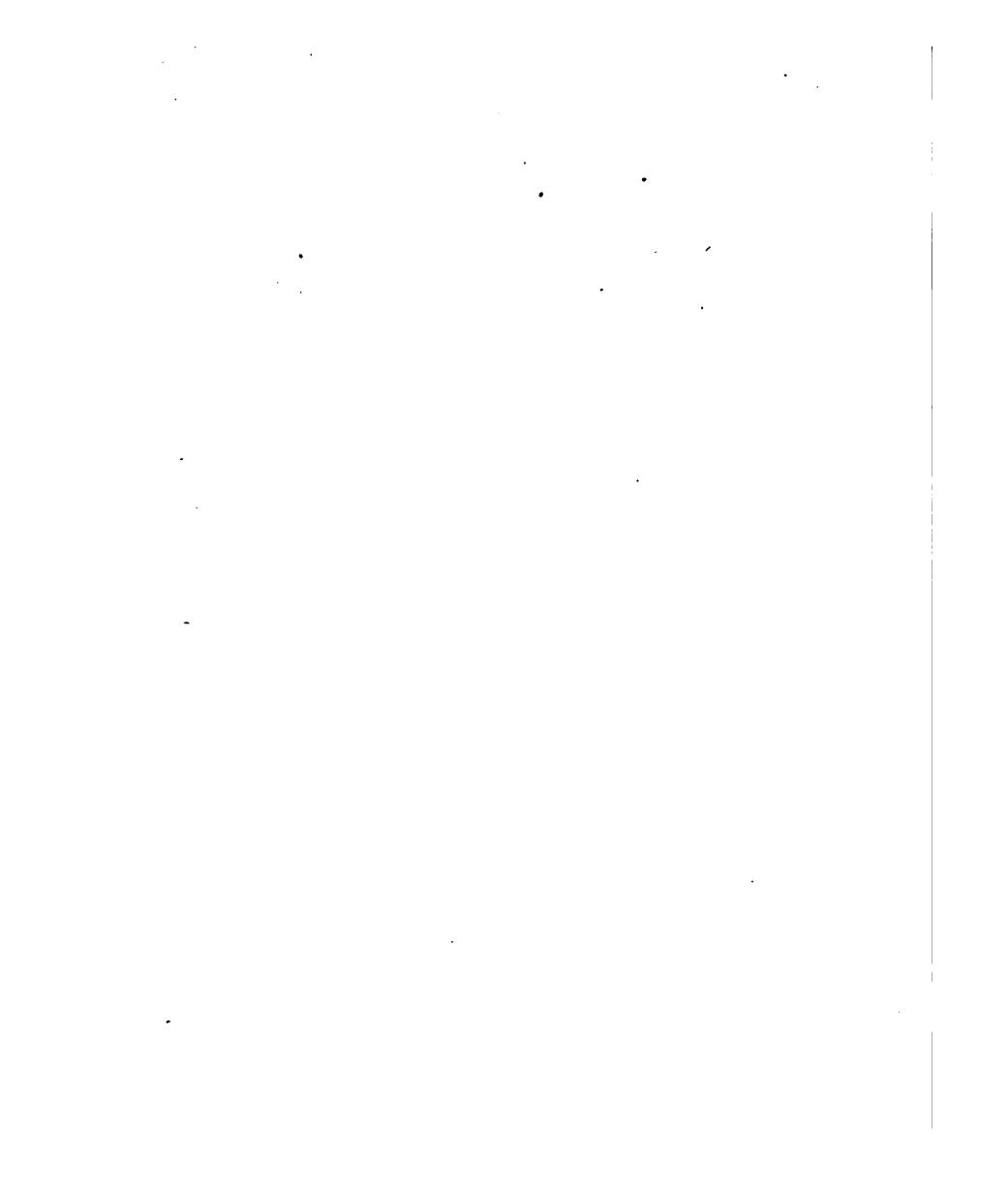
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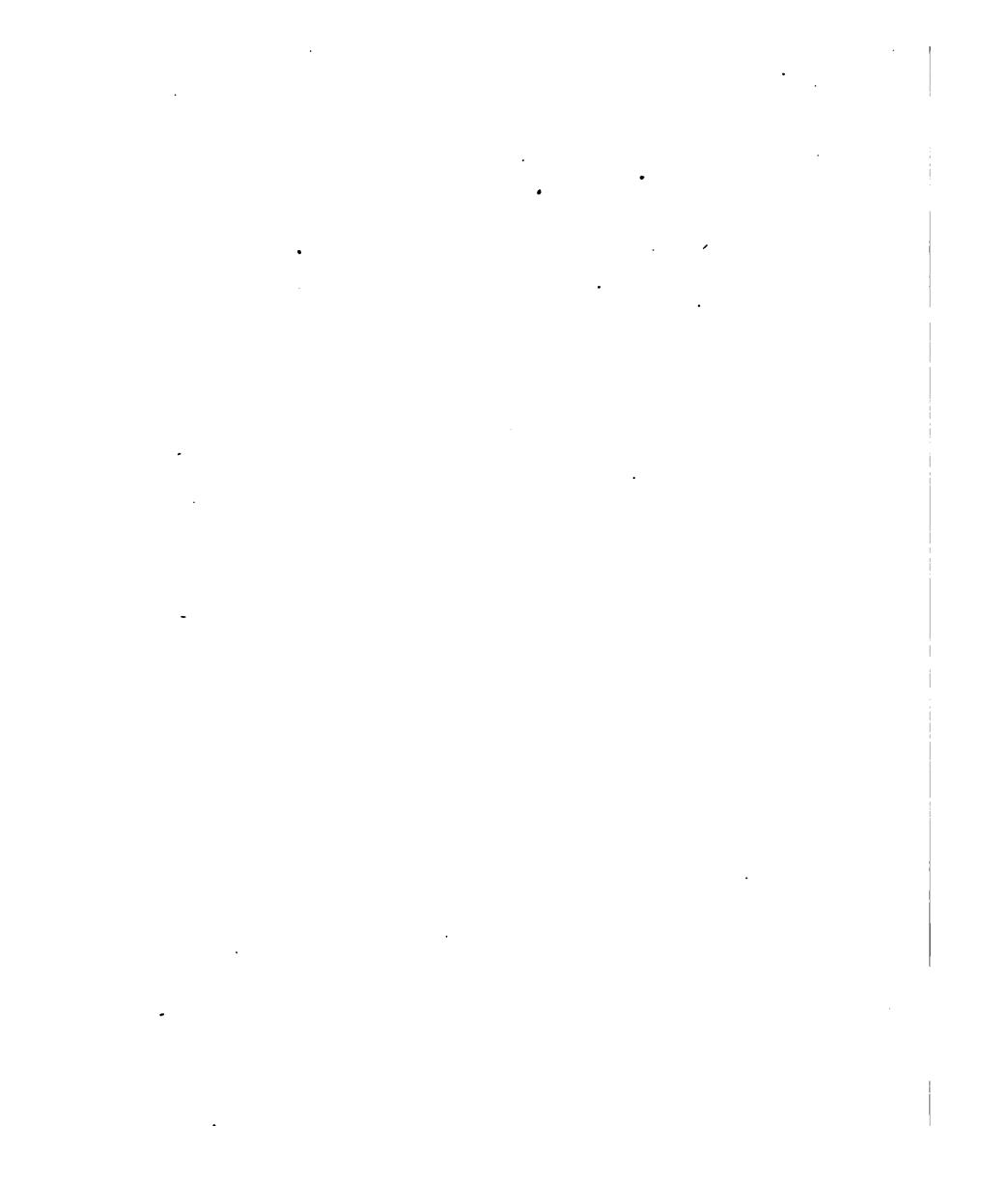




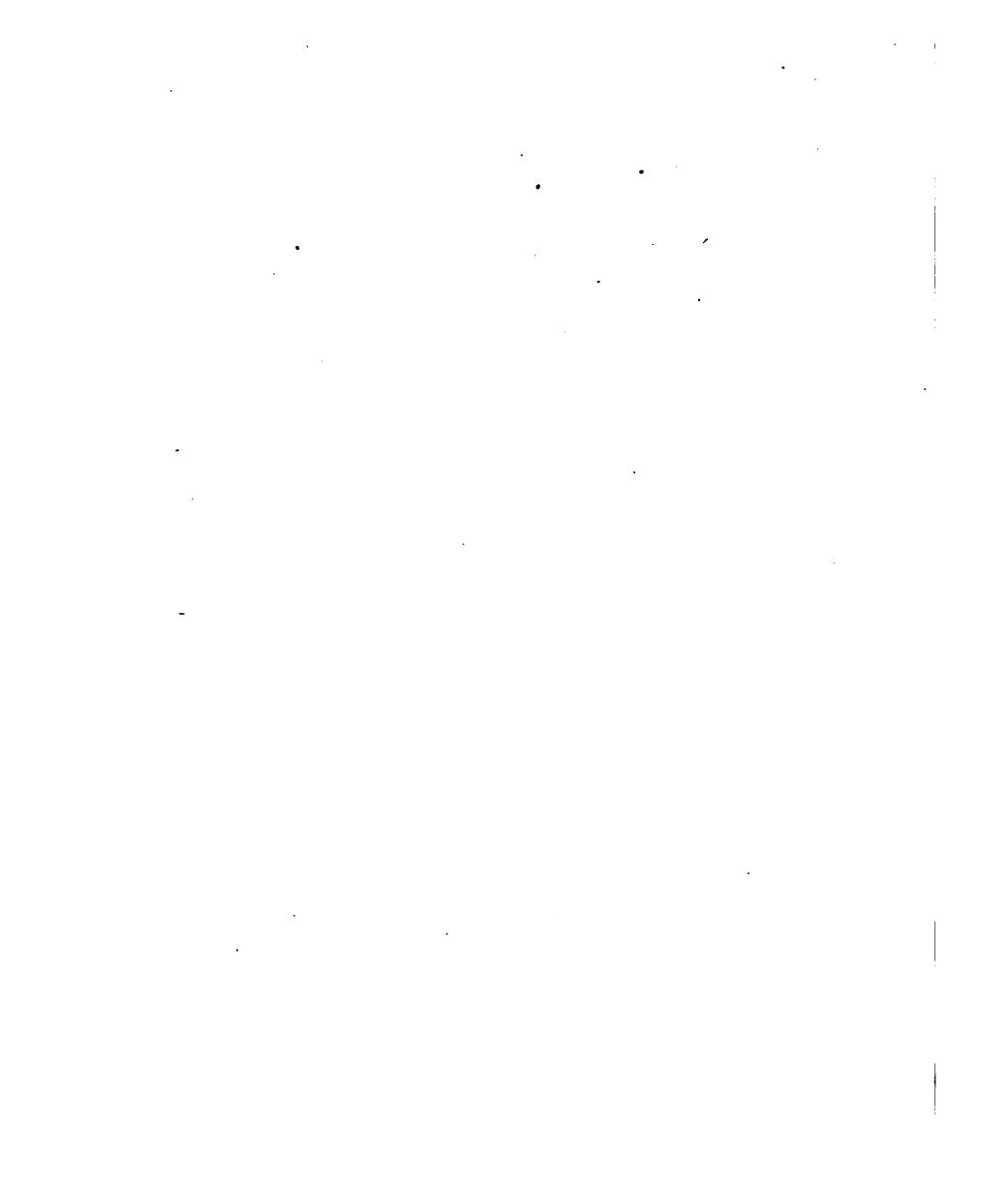




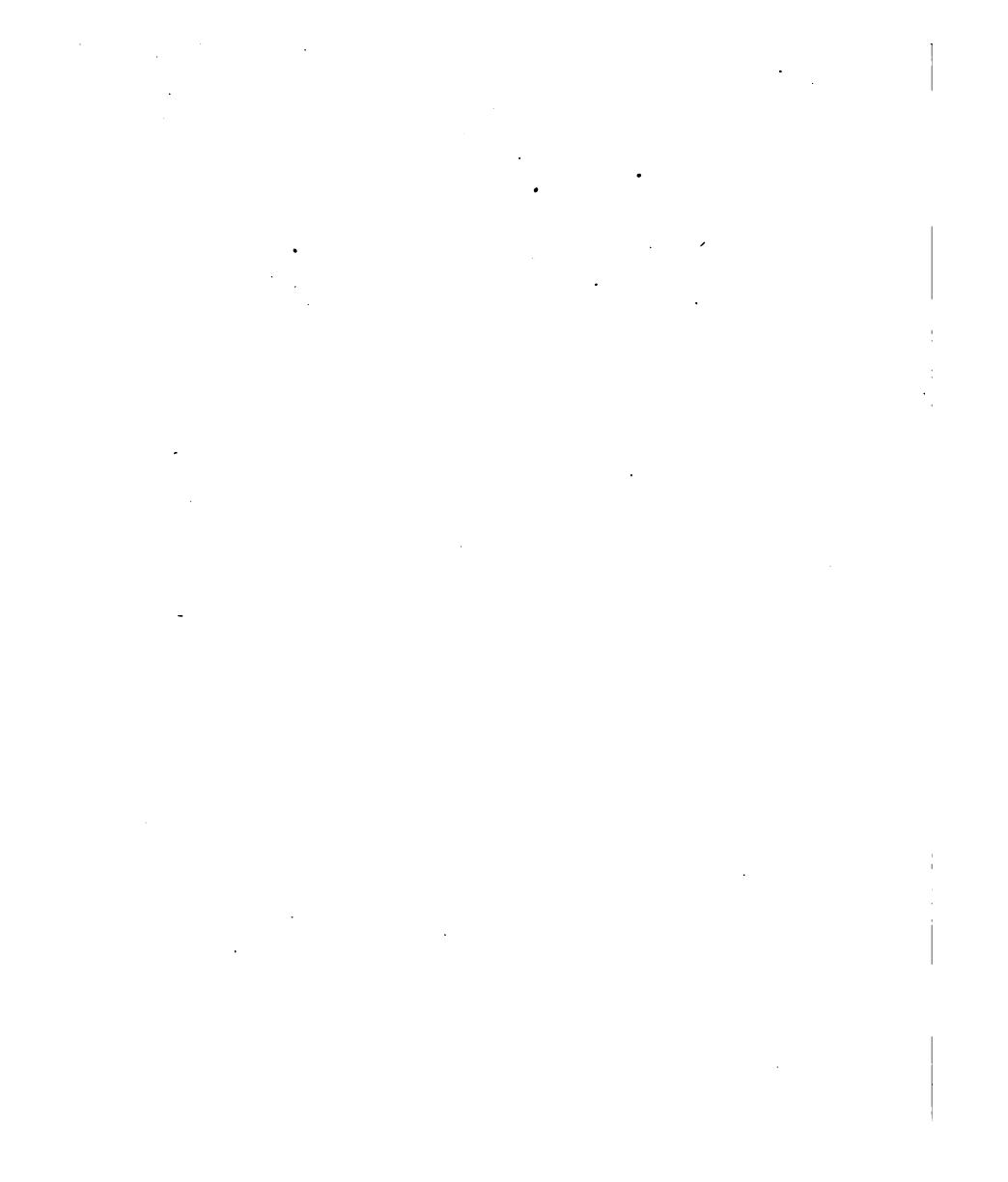


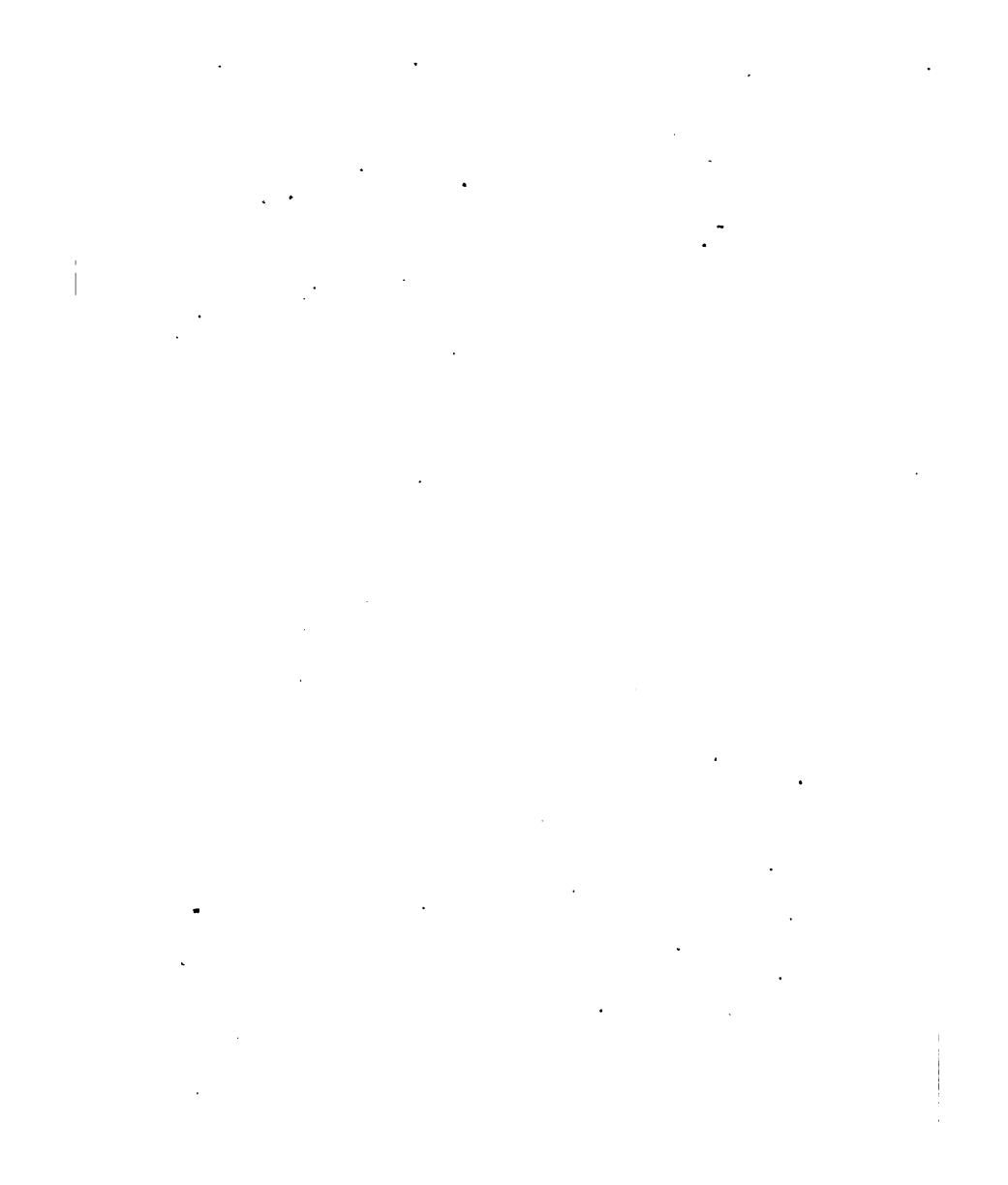














THE
*S*TORY OF A *P*ILLOW.

BY
A. C. LAMBERT.

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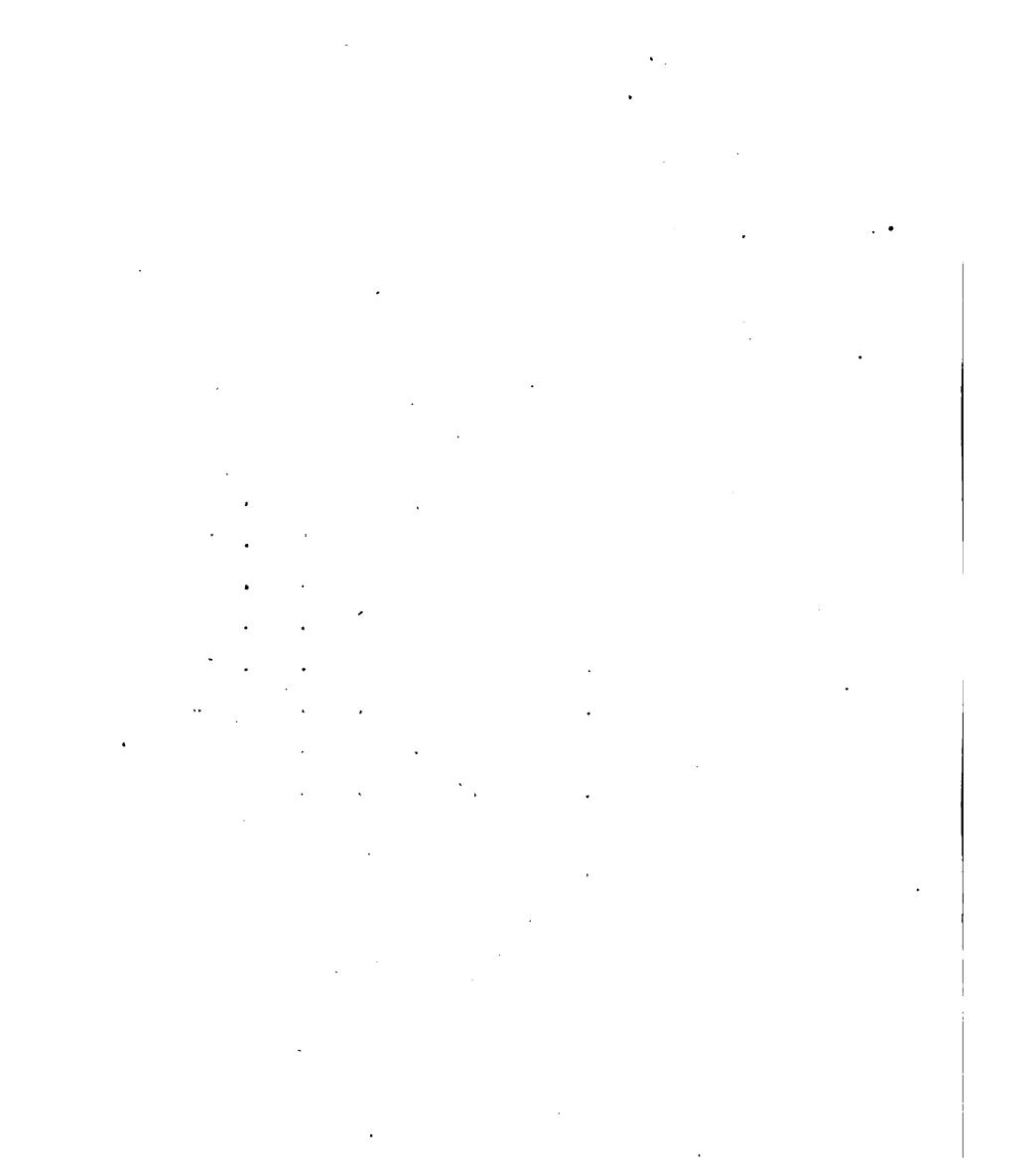


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## **THE STORY OF A PILLOW.**

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# THE STORY OF A PILLOW.

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## CHAPTER I.

### FIRST RECOLLECTIONS.



OW well I can call to mind the first day that I ever had a peep at the world! All my life (but how long I had lived I cannot say, for you know pillows—and I was only a little one—are not like children, and you must not be hard on them if they do not know how to count) I had been shut up in a close, dingy warehouse at the back of a large shop in the market place of Helmsford, closely packed on

the top and the bottom and on all sides of me with a number of brother and sister pillows.

But one day one of the men in the shop came upstairs, and after looking about for some time, and feeling first one of us and then the other, he came to my hiding-place, where I was crushed down in a dark, far off corner, and after shaking me about for some time, I heard him say to himself: 'Come now, if this won't suit, none will. It is surely soft enough, and just the right size.' And so saying he lifted me up, and, squeezing me under his arm, took me out of the room.

I cannot tell you how pleased I was to be thus set free, for I was getting very tired of my close prison, and I heard some of my brothers and sisters give a sigh of envy as the door closed after us.

It seemed a long way before we reached the bottom of the stairs, but at last we were in the shop.

'Have you found one that will do?' asked a tall, stern-looking man, of whom I caught

sight as I peeped from under the arm of the man who carried me.

‘Yes, sir ; and it is just the right size for the crib, and made of the finest eider.’ And as he spoke he handed me over to the stern-looking man, who, I soon found out, was the master of the shop.

I was turned over and over many times and was well looked at by this person, who seemed to wish to make sure that there was no hole or bad stitch in me ; but at last he seemed to think that I should do, and he bade the man who had fetched me downstairs carry me to the other end of the shop.

It must have been a very large shop—or at all events it seemed so to me—for I had little idea of space, and it was some time before we came to the other end of it. But at last the man stopped and put me down for a few minutes, and then I had time to look about me a little.

I had never thought that any place could have been so pretty. Having been shut up so long in the warehouse, and seeing nothing but

fellow pillows and bolsters, all I saw now filled me with surprise. The shop itself was very long and very pretty, the walls were all painted, and the ceiling had gold and bright colours all over it.

People were walking about the shop so grandly dressed that I did not know what to think of it all, for I had as yet only seen workmen in their working clothes and poor women who used to come to dust and mend. And looking down on my poor tick cover I am sorry to say I felt full of envy.

But just then I was taken up again and pushed rather roughly into what I thought at first was nothing else but a great sack, but which really was, as I soon found out, a pretty muslin pillow case. I looked so nice now, I was quite pleased with myself. My new cover was made of spotted muslin, with white lace all round and pretty pink bows at each corner.

After this I was taken up and put into a most lovely child's crib, which was standing in a corner in the window.

Full of surprise as I had been before at the

size of the shop, I was even more so when I looked out of the window and saw the busy street. After being used to darkness so long the light almost dazzled me, and I was nearly made deaf by the carts, trams, and 'buses and the busy tramp of the people who passed by in such numbers.

But this did not last very long, for I saw in a short time that nearly all the people had left the shop, and after a while a man came to the corner where I was and put a great handle in a small hole and began to turn the handle round and round.

As I asked myself what he could be doing, I saw that the shop began to get darker and darker; and then I saw that iron blinds were slowly creeping down the window and that the man was shutting up the shop.

Then one gas light was lit, and a young woman came round with some great white sheets in her arms, and after looking, with pleasure I thought, at the little crib in which I was placed, she put one of the sheets over me so gently that I could not help but love her;

and as I looked into her pale face, and saw how wan and tired she seemed, I could not help wishing that she might have rested her weary head upon me.

Then I heard some sweeping going on, and in a little time some one turned off the one gas light, and I heard steps walking farther and farther from me, and then a door slam, and the key turned in the lock. I knew then that I was left alone for the night.

The noise in the street still went on, but soon grew fainter and fainter ; but my new life had shown me such very strange things, and filled me with so many thoughts, that it was some time before I fell asleep.

The next morning the noise made by the man with the handle as he turned it round, and so drew up the great iron blinds from the windows, made me wake, and soon after this the dust sheets were taken off me, and I was able to look about me again.

The first thing I saw was a large bedstead, in which I was very pleased to see two of my friends whom I had known in the warehouse.

I hardly knew them at first, for they had new covers on, but they were not so pretty as mine ; and I am afraid I was rather proud at being dressed more finely than they were ; but I soon made friends with them and we began to talk to each other, and they told me many things that I knew nothing about before.

During the day I had plenty of time for looking about me, and I saw a great many strange things—at least, they were strange to me. There were tables and chairs of all sorts, bedroom chairs with cane seats, old-looking, high-backed chairs, very stiff and straight ; and then there were dining-room chairs with leather seats, some red, some blue, some brown, some green, and there were drawing-room chairs, made pretty all over with roses and other flowers, and easy chairs of all kinds ; and then there were washing-stands and chests of drawers, carpets and hearth rugs, flower stands and indeed many more things, the use of which I did not know : but among them all I could see nothing that pleased me more than the little crib which was now my home.

Round the top of it was a thick brass rim, with large, bright brass nobs at each of the four corners. The sides were of zinc, painted very light green and full of little holes, and the posts at the corners were of iron, also painted green. There were such soft blankets turned down near me and pretty white linen sheets edged with lace, and over all was a most lovely little white cover. I was laid at the head of the crib and could see all that was going on.

It made me very proud when the people who came into the shop stood and looked at me. Of course it was really the crib they were pleased with, but I was such a vain little pillow, now that I was so nicely dressed, that I always thought no one could help but admire me.

All was so new to me, and I liked to watch the people as they came into the shop ; and I passed many an hour looking out of the window at the passers by.

Very often people stopped to look in at the window. I had never known that there were so many people in the world, and so many

unlike each other: for clean little faces and dirty little faces peeped in; pale little faces and rosy little faces; old people with grey hair and young people with brown and golden, and black and red hair; happy-looking people and people who seemed full of grief; people dressed in black and people dressed in bright colours and people dressed in rags; people with smiles on their faces and people with frowns; people with laughing lips and people with angry, sullen, close-shut mouths. Then the way in which they looked at me. One man—I can see him now after all these years—came two or three times: he looked so wistful and seemed so much to long to buy me, although he knew he could not, that I was sure he must have some dear little child, of whom he was very fond, whom he would like to see resting her head at nights upon my pretty cover and me. Some faces that looked at me filled me with fear, and yet with sorrow too: they seemed so full of dark thoughts that I thought if they had a hundred pillows far softer than I was they could never get rest

by lying on them until they had got rid of their dark thoughts.

Sometimes I could make out what people said, and many a time did I hear: 'Just look at that pretty crib! O mamma, I wish I could have it!' 'Do buy it for me, papa!'

And so time passed, until after a while I even began to tire of my new life. I know it is foolish and wrong to get tired of one's lot, but you must not forget, little reader, that I was only a pillow and had not been taught better. When the shop was closed for the night I used to have long talks with my fellow pillows in the bed near me; and one day I told them how tired I was of being so long in the window, and I asked them if they thought we should always live there.

They were older and wiser than I was, and they told me that some day some one would come and buy the crib, and then perhaps I should be packed up and taken away and go to a new home, and have some little boy or girl to lay their head upon me.

How I longed for this time to come! I had

looked well at the children who passed the window, boys and girls too, and I used to wonder if I should ever live with any of them. I hoped I should have a little girl to live with, for I had seen that many of the little boys who went by were often very rough and rude, and I thought it would be much nicer to have a little girl as my mistress. There was one little girl I had taken a great fancy to. The crib would, I thought, be just the right size for her, and I longed to feel her little curly head nestling against me.

She had gone past once or twice with a little girl, her sister I thought, and a nurse. She had pretty, long, flaxen hair and nice blue eyes, and there was such a sweet, quiet, happy look upon her face.

She had pointed me out to the nurse one day as she passed, and I heard her whisper, 'Wouldn't it be nice if I had a crib like that to sleep in ?'

Her sister was rather smaller, but she could not be much more than a year younger. She had dark brown hair and laughing brown eyes,

and the look in her little brown face was so full of mischief that I felt I would rather belong to her quiet sister than to her. I saw the little girl go past very often, and I grew fonder and fonder of her. I liked her best though when I heard her say, 'Nurse, I really must ask papa to buy me that dear little bed all for myself.' How pleased I was! But it was only for a short time.

The very next morning a tall man walked into the shop with a lady leaning on his arm. She had such a sweet face and looked so kind that I could not keep my eyes off her. I felt sure I had seen some one like her before, but who it was I could not tell. I tried hard to hear what they wanted. How my heart beat when I heard them asking to look at some children's cribs.

'What size, sir, do you want?' asked the shopman. 'We have them in all sizes.'

'One that will do for a child from five to eight. What is that one in the window?' and as he spoke he walked towards the crib I was in.

'That would be just the right size, I should think,' said the lady in such a low, soft voice.

The man took them to see some others at the far end of the shop, but the lady had taken a fancy to the crib in which I was placed, and none other would suit her, and at last I was bought.

It is very hard, I thought. Why did not my little girl's papa buy me? And so I went on, in the same silly way, making myself wretched. There was one good thing about it though. *I* only made *myself* wretched. When little children are as silly as I was, they make other people—kind fathers and mothers, and sisters and brothers, and nurses—wretched too! They do not think of this.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE NEW HOME.



S soon as my new owners had left, a man came and took the crib into a large room at the other end of the shop, which was used as a packing warehouse. I was lifted out of the crib and my pretty muslin pillow case, of which I had been so proud, was, to my great distress, roughly taken off. I then felt myself being very much squeezed, and in the next minute I was rolled up tightly in the mattress. After this I knew nothing that took place for what seemed a very long time beyond feeling I was getting very much jolted about, and I began to wish myself back in the shop.

When the jolting stopped I knew that my journey was over and I had reached my new home. I heard a great deal of running about and a sound like the turning of screws, and, to my great relief, I was soon set free once more.

The person who set me free was a pleasant-looking woman, one of the servants of the house which was my new home. She shook me about a great deal, and after having got me smooth and even she dressed me again in my muslin cover (for which I was very pleased) and laid me in the crib, which was now standing ready waiting for me.

After bustling about the room in which I was for some time the woman went through some folding-doors into the next one, and then I had time to look about me a little.

I found I was in a very large room. At one end of it were two bow windows, with ledges and railings outside, which were filled with sweet smelling plants and flowers. I was at the far end of the room, but the sweet scent of the flowers, as it was blown through the

open window, reached even to where I was lying.

The paper on the walls was bright with birds and flowers in gay colours, and pictures of all sorts and sizes added to the beauty of the room. Over the fireplace there was a large clock, and I was very much startled all at once to see a bird jump out of it and call in a loud voice, 'Cuckoo!' four or five times and then pop back into the clock. I was puzzled to know what it could be doing and how it could live inside the clock. On a shelf below the clock were some white vases with pretty flowers in them.

At one end of the room there was a rocking-horse, so large and life-like, with a long mane and tail of real hair, that I thought at first it was a real horse; and not far from it there was a large doll's house. Close by the side of the crib I was in there was a doll's bed, with curtains and sheets and blankets and pillows, just like a real bed; and next to the doll's bed there was a child's crib. It was not so new as the one I was in, but it looked very

pretty and nice; and I was going to make friends with the pillows in it when I heard the sound of children's voices on the stairs.

Now, thought I, I shall see the nasty child who is to knock me about so, for I had quite made up my mind that I should dislike her.

The children's voices drew nearer and nearer, and soon they came in at the door with the lady I had seen at the shop.

'O mamma, what a beauty!' cried the elder of the two children. 'And is it to be my very own?' and as she spoke she ran up to the crib and stood by my side.

I started as I heard the child speak, for I at once knew that voice; and what was my delight when I saw it was the same little girl to whom I had taken such a fancy while in Markham's shop! Yes. There was the flaxen hair, the blue eyes, and the quiet smile; there could be no mistake about it. I was too much pleased to think about it then, but later on I felt how foolish I had been to make myself so wretched without a cause.

'Yes, Nina dear,' said the lady; 'it is to be

your own cot, and I hope you will like it and find it very nice.'

'And may I sleep in it to-night?' asked the little one with eager face.

'Yes, my darling; and you will try, will you not? to be a very good little girl in it and go to sleep when you are put to bed, and not play?'

'Oh yes, mamma; I will. I wish it were bedtime now. I shall like going to bed now.'

'Flossy, my dear,' said Mrs. Crossley (for that was the lady's name), looking at the other little girl who stood without speaking; 'Flossy, you have your own little bed, you know; and it will be so nice to have Nina by you.' For Mrs. Crossley could see that Flossy wanted the new crib too.

'Oh! but, mamma, I should like Nina's crib to sleep in; it is much nicer than mine,' said the little girl, pouting her lips, and looking very much as though she were going to cry.

'Oh! but Flossy must not talk in that way. My little girl knows that her bed was very like Nina's when it was new, and I like my little girls to be content with what they have, and

not cry for each other's things. Flossy will try, won't she?' and as she spoke Mrs. Crossley bent down and kissed her child.

'Never mind, Flossy,' said Nina kindly; 'you shall come into my bed when it is time to play in the morning, and we shall have such fun. It will be so nice sleeping near each other.' And as she spoke the sullen look passed away from Flossy's face and the two children stood side by side and hand in hand looking with pleasure at the crib.

'And look what a pretty pillow I have got,' said Nina, putting her little hand upon me. 'It has lace on it and pink bows. O mother! it was kind of you and father to buy me it.'

'I am very glad you like it, my dear; but here is Baby: let us see what she says to it.'

'It was kind of you to buy me my crib, too; wasn't it, mother? I must not forget that; must I?' said Flossy.

I was quite pleased with her when I heard her say this, but I was more pleased with Nina, for I knew that one good little girl helps to make other little girls good.

Just then nurse came in with a little girl in her arms, who, because she was the youngest, went by the name of Baby. But she was just two years old, and so was not really a baby. She could run about all over by herself, but could not talk quite plainly.

On seeing her mother she struggled to get down from her nurse, and as soon as she was set on her legs she ran straight up to her mother.

‘Mothie, take Daisy,’ she said. ‘Daisy’s been ta-tas. Seen quack-quacks, gobble-gobbles.’ And she chatted along in her own way until her mother took her up and showed her the new crib.

‘Look, Daisy,’ she said. ‘This is Nina’s new crib. Isn’t it a pretty one?’

The child stared at it in surprise for some time and then said, clapping her little fat hands: ‘Daisy go bye-byes in it! Daisy go bye-byes in it!’

The pink ribbons chiefly caught her notice, and I felt her chubby little fingers pressed against me as she tried to grasp one of the bright pink bows.

And then the children's outdoor clothes were all taken off and they were made tidy, ready for tea.

Nurse spread a clean, white cloth over the table, which stood in the middle of the room, and soon I heard a clatter of cups and saucers. Mrs. Crossley stayed with her little ones until they were all ready to sit down to tea, and I saw that Nina and Flossy both bent down their heads and folded their hands and said their grace before they began to eat, and even little Daisy was taught to clasp her little fat hands and say, 'Ta for nice tea.'

Such a good tea they were getting—nice new milk warm from the cow, slices of bread and butter, and sweet buns and seedcake.

They all seemed to be very hungry and to like their tea very much except little Nina, who was thinking too much about her new crib to be very hungry; and many times her nurse had to remind her that she was not sitting nicely, for she kept turning her head round to look at her bed.

I saw that the children never left any piece

on their plates, all were eaten up before nurse let them leave the table. It was to teach them not to waste and not to ask for more than they wanted.

As soon as tea was over the three children came and played in the corner by me, and Nina kept asking nurse if it was not bedtime. They amused themselves very nicely playing at taking off the clothes and washing and dressing their dolls while nurse cleared away the tea-things, but now and then I heard Flossy speaking in angry tones to little Daisy, who wanted her playthings. This made Daisy cry, and then nurse had to leave her work and come and make peace between them.

It seemed to me such a pity that these little children, who lived in such a pretty house and had such kind friends to take care of them and so many toys to amuse themselves with, could not play without so many quarrels.

I hope, dear little reader, that you try to be kind and loving to your little brothers and sisters. Nina seemed very kind to her little sisters that night, and when the bell rang for

them all to go downstairs and say good night, I heard nurse say to her, as she was smoothing her hair, 'You can tell your mother, Miss Nina, that you have been a very good little girl to-night.'

They were soon upstairs again, and then they were all washed and put to bed—Nina the first that night, for she was so eager to get into her new crib; and the others were eager too to see her in it.

Mrs. Crossley came upstairs to kiss her little ones and hear them say their prayers before they went to bed, and Mr. Crossley came up too that he might see how his little girl looked in her new crib. He lifted her up himself and put her into bed, saying as he did so, 'And now, my child, I hope you are happy.' And as she laid her little curly head down upon me, I thought to myself that if the little girl were as happy as I was she was more happy that night than she had ever been in her life.

At first she lay so very still that I thought she had gone to sleep, but by-and-by she began



to fidget about and at last sat up and looked about her; and then, seeing that Flossy was awake too, she began to talk to her. Poor little Flossy was very tired, and her answers became shorter and shorter, and in a little time she was in the land of dreams.

But still Nina did not lie down again, but sat up, looking at the brass rim and nobs and all the other things about her bed, until I began to be afraid that it was I she did not like.

It was eight o'clock when nurse came back, after getting Daisy to sleep, and great was her surprise to find Nina, who had been in such a hurry to go to bed, still awake.

'What, my dear, not asleep yet?' she asked, coming up to the side of the crib. 'What does this mean? Don't you like your bed?'

'Yes, nurse, very much; but I'm not very sleepy. I did keep still a long time, but I could not go to sleep.'

'And what about your pillow? Why don't you lie down upon it? Isn't it soft?' asked nurse.

‘ Oh, it ’s so soft and pretty and nice ! ’ said the child ; ‘ it makes me so comfee.’ You may be sure I felt very happy at being so praised.

‘ Well, let me see how you look lying on it.’ And as she spoke nurse gently laid the little one’s head down, and ere long my little mistress shut her pretty blue eyes and was fast asleep.



## CHAPTER III.

### NINA AND FLOSSY.



LOSSY was the first to wake in the morning, and as she sat up and rubbed her sleepy little eyes, she looked about her, knowing that something was new, but she forgot what it was.

But soon she caught sight of the new crib, and then Nina's promise of the night before about their both playing in it came to her mind, and so all thought of going to sleep again was quite out of the question.

‘Nina, Nina, wake up, wake up !’ she cried ; and in a little time Nina's sleepy little eyes were open, and when nurse came into the room they were both happy, playing in the new crib.

She did not expect to see them awake so soon, but she praised them for being so quiet and not waking Daisy, who was in the next room.

But it was not long before Baby's voice was heard, and she came toddling in her little white nightgown and with bare feet, and nothing would please her but to join her sisters in the crib; and this nurse let her do. So the three little girls played away until nurse was ready to dress them.

I am afraid my muslin cover was not very tidy after all the knocking about it got, but I was so pleased to see the children so happy, and to hear their merry laughter, that I did not think much about myself.

It would take too long to tell you all that these little children did day by day, but as I am sure little people like to know a great deal about the children they read of in books, I will tell you how, as a rule, they passed their time.

As soon as nurse had dusted the room she fetched the bath water, and then the children were tubbed and dressed. I am sorry to have to tell you that sometimes there was a good deal

of crying over the dressing. Nina and Flossy both liked being dressed the first, and they used sometimes to quarrel as to whose turn it was to have a bath first, and when this was so nurse would often make them both wait until little Daisy was dressed, and then she took the one who had been the less naughty during that time.

You know, dear children, that I am only a pillow, and, having nothing else to do, I could see things that these children never thought about; and it seemed to me such a pity these bright little faces should be ever clouded over with tears. If they had been kinder to each other and been more patient they would have been so much more happy.

I hope, little reader, you don't get cross and angry when nurse is not ready to dress you at the exact minute you want her, but try and be patient until it is your turn to be dressed.

Nina, I am sorry to say, although she was the eldest, and ought to have shown her little sisters how to be good, was sometimes the

most naughty. She had a very strong will, and when once she was put out, it was some time before she was good again. She used to scream so much that sometimes nurse could not do with her in the room, and had to shut her up in the next room and leave her there by herself until she was good again.

But she was a tender-hearted little girl, and was always very sorry after it was over ; and I used to hear her say to nurse when she fetched her back again : ' Do forgive me, nurse. I know I have been very naughty, and I have asked God to forgive me ; and I know He will, for mamma told me He would if we were sorry.' And then nurse would talk to her and tell her how very wrong it was to give way to her naughty temper, and then she would kiss the little grave face that was turned up to her and tell Nina that she forgave her and hoped she would never do so any more.

Little Flossy was often very naughty while she was getting her hair done. I don't know how it was, but she used to cry and scream when she was getting it brushed and combed.

It was not that nurse was rough with her, for she was always very kind to them all, and she used to be as careful as she could, but I think it must have been that Flossy was not patient and did not like standing still. She was such a restless little fidget, never still a moment when she had her own way; but if she had known how sorry it made nurse, and how grieved her mother was to hear so much crying, I think she would have tried to be a better girl.

But my little readers must not think that Nina and Flossy were always naughty. Oh no. They were on the whole good children, but sometimes they gave way to their naughty tempers, and then all the peace of the mother and nurse and children was gone.

When they were all dressed nurse took them to their mother's room, where they stayed until breakfast was ready; and the merry shouts of laughter which very often came from the room told that the children were having a good romp with their father.

Nina and Flossy had breakfast downstairs, so I did not see them again until that meal was

over. Little Daisy always had her breakfast upstairs with nurse.

By the time they had done, and nurse had got all cleared away, Mrs. Crossley used to come upstairs to teach Nina and Flossy. Nina could read easy words, for she was five years old, and was learning to write and spell. Flossy nearly knew all her letters, and they could both count and say some little hymns very nicely.

Sometimes they were very good indeed over their lessons and seemed to like what they were learning, but sometimes, I am sorry to say, they gave their kind mother great trouble.

How well I can call to mind one day when Flossy had been very naughty over her lessons, and although she knew very well that A was not B, nor G, C, she made a pretence that she did not; and not caring at all for what her mother said to her, she would not do what she was told. Mrs. Crossley bore with her for a long time, but at last she could not help it but must punish her. She called nurse to take her into the next room and shut her up by

herself until she was good, and so the screaming little girl was carried away.

Nina looked very sorry when she saw her little sister so naughty, and began to cry too. To comfort her Mrs. Crossley took the little girl on her knee and tried to explain to her how grieved she was to be obliged to punish Flossy.

‘Do you know, my dear,’ she said, ‘it hurts me much more than it hurts Flossy?’ The tears came into her eyes as she spoke. Nina often thought of this in after times when she was going to be naughty, and it did her good.

Nina’s tears were soon wiped away, and she was a very good little girl at her lessons for the rest of the time. And when Mrs. Crossley had done all the teaching she sent for Flossy, who was now sorry for being naughty, and when she came back again the letters were all said through without a mistake.

Little reader, I wonder if I ever came into the room when you were saying your lessons what I should see. I hope you try to attend and learn all you can. You know it is for

your own good you are taught, and it is very kind of your mother to be so patient in teaching you. Children are all so much more happy when they are good, and they enjoy playing so much more when they are doing their work well.

On a fine day, as soon as lessons were over, Nina and Flossy always went either into the garden to play or out for a walk with their nurse. I got to know about the garden one day quite by chance. Nurse left me one day for a whole morning at the open window, which looked out on the garden where the children were playing. They had their dolls and balls and hoops out with them, and from the merry peals of laughter which I heard I am sure they must have been very happy.

Nina and Flossy had each a little garden of their own, which they kept tidy themselves. They had such a nice little set of tools—a spade, a rake, and a hoe—with which they worked. The man who looked after the garden was a very kind old man, and with his help their gardens always looked very pretty.

One thing I liked very much about these children, if ever they wanted their little tools or a toy they always knew where to get them without troubling other people. 'What clever little folks they are!' I said to myself. 'I wonder how they manage to do so much by themselves.' But I soon found it out, for when they had done with a thing they always put it away, and so knew where to find it when they next wanted it. 'Those who hide can find.'

At twelve o'clock they all came in to dinner. Nina had a great many fancies about her food, and nurse had often a great deal of trouble with her. Mrs. Crossley would allow nothing to be wasted, and nurse used to tell Nina about the poor little children whose parents are so poor that they have no money to buy their little boys and girls nice things to eat, and so they often have nothing but dry bread, and only a very little of that sometimes, and how thankful they would be to eat what she wanted to waste.

Flossy was always hungry and ready for her dinner, and like a good child would eat up all

that was set before her; but Nina, I am sorry to say, had often a good cry over her dinner, and all because she was foolish enough to fancy she did not like the food that was given to her.

As soon as dinner was over Daisy was put to sleep and Nina and Flossy both went to their little cribs to have a rest. Sometimes when they were very tired they fell asleep, but not always, and in an hour's time nurse let them get up again. Nina's little fingers used to fidget a good deal at this time with my pretty pink bows, which soon lost their freshness.

When it was time for the children to get up they went downstairs to their mamma for an hour while nurse had her dinner; and if it were fine after this they went for a walk either with their mamma or nurse. Then they had a good play with their toys until tea was ready, and after tea they played about, or nurse told them some nice story, until it was time to go downstairs and say good night, after which the three little ones were soon fast asleep; and it was the nicest time of all the day for

me when I had Nina's dear little curly head nestling against me.

Most days passed much in the same way except Sunday. I must not forget to tell you that on Saturday night all the toys were put away in a large cupboard until Monday morning. On Sunday Mrs. Crossley always came into the room as soon as breakfast was over and went to a large drawer, which was full of bright pictures and cards and picture books. There was a large Noah's ark and bricks with pretty pictures on them, all of which the children might play with as much as they liked on Sunday, but I saw that their mother did not allow them to play with them on any other day.

Mr. and Mrs. Crossley did all they could to make Sunday a happy day to their little ones, and I am sure they had their wish.

Now, little readers, I have told you all this about Nina and Flossy because I know little children like to hear what other little children do, and I want you to learn something from them.

When it is time to get up in a morning try

and say to yourself: 'I will be like Nina and Flossy were when they were good. I won't cry if nurse doesn't dress me first; I will be patient and wait till my turn comes. I will try and sit still while my hair is being done, and even if nurse *does* pull me a little I will try and be patient, for I know mother does not like to hear me crying, and it is so much more easy for nurse to dress me when I am good.'

And then when lesson time comes think how much more happy Nina and Flossy were when they were good. You see, like all other little girls and boys, they had to learn their lessons, and it made it so much more easy for their mother to teach them when they gave their whole minds to their work and did not cry or be pettish, and they were so much more happy the rest of the day when they were able to think, 'I did not make mother sorry this morning.'

## CHAPTER IV.

### CHRISTMAS WITH THE LITTLE ONES.



HERE is one time of the year which, I think, children love better than any other and look forward to with greater joy, and that is Christmas time. It was so, I am sure, with Nina and Flossy, and I dare say it is the same with you, little reader. For weeks before they were very busy, and I used to hear whispers going on between the little ones as to what presents they were going to give and what they hoped to receive.

Two or three weeks before Christmas Mrs. Crossley came into the room and told Nina

and Flossy a story about some little children who lived in a very wretched part of the town, where fathers and mothers were too poor to give their little ones any treat at Christmas time. She told them how these poor children had no nice room like theirs to play in, nor any pretty toys to play with, and very often hardly any bread to eat; and she said she thought it would be very nice if Nina and Flossy were to look over their toys and see if they could not spare some of them to give to these poor little ones. ‘Nurse will help you to mend what are broken, I am sure, and if you get me out what you can spare I will take care that some poor little children shall be made happy with them at Christmas time. You know, my darlings, that we keep Christmas because of Jesus Christ being born a little child into this world of ours that we may be made happy for ever and ever. It is His birthday, and at all times, most of all at this joyous season of the year, we ought to try and please Him; and He is always pleased when He sees little children trying to make others happy. Would you like

to do as I say, my dears?' she said, kissing the two little eager faces which were looking up to her.

'Oh yes, mamma; we should, we should!' they both said. 'And you will help us, nurse; won't you?'

Nurse gladly said she would, being pleased to see her little ones so ready to help others.

'And me help too,' chimed in little Daisy, who would not be passed over.

'Yes, darling; you shall help too,' said Mrs. Crossley as she took the little one on her knee.

That same afternoon the toy cupboard was turned out and a large heap of toys was put on one side for the poor children who had no toys of their own to play with. To these children of wealthy parents, brought up in the midst of all that they could desire, the thought of there being any children without toys to play with was very sad. They were so much touched that they would have given away nearly all they had, had not nurse stopped them and only let them give what she knew their mamma would be willing they should part with.

A great many of the toys that were chosen wanted mending, and watching and helping nurse to make them as good as new again caused plenty of fun for many long afternoons; and by Christmas time a very good-sized parcel of toys was ready. Mrs. Crossley took the toys herself to the poor children, and she had to tell her little ones, when she came home again, of many a poor child whose life had been made brighter by their kindness.

Nurse also mended a bundle of old clothes, which were most welcome to many poor mothers who were so badly off that they had nothing but rags with which to clothe their children. And it made Nina and Flossy, much more happy to think that they had been helping, if only in a little way, to make others happy.

Reader, do you ever think of the poor at Christmas time? You who have homes of comfort and all if not more than you can really want, do you ever think of the poor, half-starved little children who live in the close courts of our large towns? See if you cannot

give some of your toys away, and so help, like Nina and Flossy, to do good to others.

But you will want to know how Nina and Flossy spent their Christmas.

On Christmas Eve all the three children had tea downstairs with their father and mother. Nurse had hers in the kitchen, and so it was very quiet indeed upstairs; but now and then I could hear merry shouts of laughter from the little ones downstairs. They were later than usual in coming to bed that night, and the first thing that Nina and Flossy did when they came into the room was to bring a large stocking (which I could see from its size was their papa's) and hang it by the side of their beds. 'And do you know, nurse?' they both called out, 'Santa Claus will come in the night and put us some presents in.'

'Not unless you go to sleep, my dears.' But they thought so much about their stockings that they seemed as though they would never fall asleep, and it was getting very late indeed before I felt Nina's soft little curls pressed against me.

Later on nurse came on tip-toe to the side of the two cots and slipped a paper parcel into each of the little girl's stockings. Soon after this Mr. and Mrs. Crossley came upstairs laden with parcels. I was very pleased to see the servants come in, one after the other, each with a little present. I was proud of my children, for I thought they had made themselves loved by all who knew them.

Both of the children's stockings were soon filled to the top, and a large paper parcel was also put at the foot of each little crib; and before leaving the room Mr. and Mrs. Crossley stooped down and kissed their sleeping little ones.

I was full of wonder to know what the parcels at the end of the beds were, and I lay awake for some time guessing what they could be, until at last I too fell asleep. I awoke almost before it was daylight the next morning and heard Flossy, who was sitting up in her little bed, calling: 'Nina, Nina, wake up! it's Christmas. Wake up and let us see what is in our stockings.'

It did not take long to rouse the little sleeper, and very soon the two children were diving down in their stockings among their treasures.

It was a pretty sight to see them sitting up in their snow-white nightgowns, with their long curls hanging loosely over their shoulders, and to watch their happy little faces and hear their merry shouts of laughter and pleasant surprise as one treasure after another was brought forth.

Surely no children ever had so many or such pretty presents. There were balls and sweets, toys of nearly all sorts, tea-things and dinner sets, boxes with toy tables and chairs for the doll's house, and picture books; and wrapped up in each of the parcels which I had had so many guesses about was a lovely wax doll, dressed in long clothes, with a hood and cloak, just like a real baby; and on a paper pinned to the frock of the one in Nina's bed were written these words: 'For our darling little Nina, with father and mother's best love.'

Nina gave a cry of delight as she undid the string and found the doll.

‘And I have got one too,’ cried Flossy; and she held up a doll just the same as Nina’s, except that the hood of her doll was trimmed with blue and Nina’s with pink.

And then came nurse and Daisy, bringing all her presents with her. She had also a doll very like Nina’s and Flossy’s, only not quite so large.

It was a very happy day for the children, and as soon as they were dressed they went as usual to their mother’s room. Nina was in a great hurry, for she had a surprise for her father and mother. Nurse had taught her, quite unknown to her mother, to do wool work, and she had taken great pains, and soon learnt to do it very nicely. So she was now able to give a present of her own making to both her parents. For her mother Nina had worked a kettle holder and for her father a marker to put in his large Bible.

Mr. and Mrs. Crossley were very pleased with their little girl’s work. Mrs. Crossley said she should prize it more than any other present she had had, and Mr. Crossley said he should

never part with his bookmarker as long as he lived.

The children were not much in my room that day, but, to my delight, I was taken downstairs at dessert time and put into Daisy's chair, for without me she could not reach with comfort up to the table.

There were other ladies and gentlemen dining with Mr. and Mrs. Crossley, which made the children rather shy at first; but they had been taught how to behave nicely, and always spoke when they were spoken to. But their shyness soon wore off, and they were all very happy.

When dessert was over and all the things had been cleared away the servant brought three or four long forms into the room and a great many chairs, and by-and-by I heard a great clatter of feet in the hall. On the room door being set open about thirty or forty children, all dressed alike in blue frocks and cloaks and white straw hats, trimmed with blue, were shown into the room. Nina and Flossy and Daisy were with them with their

mother, who spoke so kindly to the children that they were soon quite at their ease.

Flossy and Nina showed them their Christmas presents, and the dolls in long clothes caused many a little eye to open wide with wonder.

After a time Mr. Crossley and the other ladies and gentlemen came into the room, and Mr. Crossley drew back some curtains, which were at the far end of the room facing the chairs and forms, and which I had not seen before ; and then I saw the most lovely sight I think that I have ever seen. It was a large Christmas tree, all lighted up with Chinese lanterns and tiny little candles of all colours. From the branches of the tree were hung most pretty presents—workboxes, writing desks, dolls, books, mittens, and a great many more things, too many for me to tell you all. As the curtains were drawn aside, and the tree came in view, there was a dead silence ; but it did not last long, for in a few seconds the room rang with the shouts and clapping of hands of the happy children.

‘ Oh look ! see how pretty ! what lovely things ! ’ they cried. And then when Mr. Crossley spoke to them and told them how glad he was to see them all, and that he hoped they would have a happy afternoon and be pleased with the presents which he and Mrs. Crossley had had hung on the tree for them, they all called out, ‘ Oh, thank you, sir ; thank you, sir ! ’

They stood looking and gazing at the tree for a long time, and then the presents were given away. Nina and Flossy, and even little Daisy, helped to carry them to the happy children.

And then Mr. Crossley talked to them about Christmas and told them how it was we kept Christmas. He said he hoped they all loved Jesus, who had done so much for them, and tried to please Him every day. And if he, or his wife, or any one else had been kind to them, it was not their own doing but only because Jesus made them kind.

And then he asked the children if they could sing a Christmas hymn, and they all sang very sweetly—



‘Once in royal David’s city  
    Stood a lowly cattle shed,  
Where a mother laid her Baby  
    In a manger for His bed.  
Mary was that mother mild,  
    Jesus Christ her little Child.’

I heard soon after that the children were from an orphan school in the town ; children of poor parents, or with no parents at all, who had no homes of their own to be happy in on Christmas Day.

Then came some games—puss in the corner, blind man’s buff, and hunt the slipper. Nina, Flossy, and Daisy all joined in the play, and liked it as much as any one there. And when they were tired tea was ready, and such a tea ! There were bread and jam, which was quite a treat to the little orphans, and buns and tea-cakes and sweet biscuits ; and when tea was over a parcel of nuts and an orange were given to each child to take away with him. And then it was time for them all to leave ; and each little one was sent home with a happy heart, feeling that, although having now no father and mother’s care, there were still

some who loved them and made them happy.

I thought when they had all gone that I was going to be left behind, but at last, after all the bustle was over, nurse came running down-stairs to fetch me, and I found little Nina sitting up in her crib (with her new doll on a chair by her side) waiting for me, and soon her little head was pressed against me; and it was not many minutes before she was fast asleep.



## CHAPTER V.

### NINA'S ILLNESS.



UT I must now tell you something very sad—something which befell my dear little Nina soon after this happy Christmas, and which cast a shadow on all in the house.

One morning Mrs. Crossley wished to say something to nurse, so she sent Nina upstairs to tell her that she wanted her. Little Nina, who was always very pleased to be useful and go on little errands for her kind mother, came running blithely up the stairs, but hearing a door shut in the hall, she stopped and looked over the banisters to see what it was.

All at once I heard a little scream, then a

dreadful noise like a heavy bump, and then a sound as of some one rolling' down the stairs.

Nurse started and then rushed out of the nursery with Daisy in her arms. She was away for some time, but came back at last looking very white. Flossy was with her, sobbing very much, and tears were rolling down her cheeks.

‘O Nina, Nina!’ she kept crying. ‘What’s the matter? Nina, Nina! Nurse, let me go to her.’

Nurse tried to comfort her, but I could see she was too much grieved herself to be able to say very much to the child.

I heard many doors open and shut downstairs, and then there was a sound of carriage wheels in the street, which stopped at the house. Nurse told Flossy, who was looking out of the window, still in great distress, that it was Dr. Thompson come to see if he could make Nina better.

Dr. Thompson was the doctor who always came to see the little Crossleys when they were ill, and very fond they were of him; and it seemed quite to cheer Flossy to think that he

had come to see Nina. When she had been ill Dr. Thompson had done her good, and she felt sure that Nina would soon be quite well again if he saw her; and she said to nurse,—

‘I am glad my Dr. Thompson has come. Nina will soon be well again now; won’t she, nurse?’

‘I hope so, my dear,’ said nurse.

‘May I ask God to make her well again?’ asked the child.

‘Yes, my darling; do,’ said nurse. And the little child knelt down and, in her own baby way, said: ‘Please, God, Nina is very poorly and Flossy is so sorry; she wants Nina to come and play with her again: please make her better for Jesus Christ’s sake.’ And the little one rose from her knees, with a lighter heart and brighter face, and ran up to Daisy and began to play with her, and seemed quite happy again.

Just then one of the other servants came into the room and said something to nurse in a whisper.

From what I could make out it seemed that

Nina had fallen over the banisters and was very much hurt. 'Dr. Thompson is with her now,' I heard the housemaid say; 'and we shall know better how she is when he comes out.'

You may be sure I was very grieved to hear this. To think that my little mistress, of whom I was so fond, was so hurt! and I longed to hear how she was getting on. I had to wait some time, but at last Mr. Crossley came up himself into the nursery.

'Nurse,' he said in a very grave voice, 'you must try and keep all as quiet as you can upstairs: Miss Nina is very ill.' And I saw that his lips trembled as he spoke and tears filled his eyes. 'A great deal depends, Dr. Thompson says, upon perfect stillness. But they want the crib taken into your mistress' room. You must get Harman to help you to carry it.'

While nurse went to fetch Harman Mr. Crossley took Flossy and Daisy, who had run up to him as soon as he came into the room, upon his knees, and, kissing them sadly, said to

Flossy: 'Flossy, dear Nina is very poorly: will you try and be as quiet as ever you can?'

'Yes, papa; but isn't she better yet? I asked God to make her well.' And the look of sorrow came over her face again.

'Father is glad you did, my dear. We must trust her to Him; but God likes us to do the little we can to help Him. You must be very good and quiet, and try to keep Daisy quiet too, until Nina is better.'

'Yes, papa; I will,' said the child, pleased to think that she could be of any use.

Just then nurse came back with Harman, and I was taken with the crib out of the nursery. We went down a flight of stairs and then into a room, which I knew was Mrs. Crossley's. We were placed by the side of a large bed and then nurse went to the windows and drew down all the blinds and put in the shutters until the room was quite dark. Then all went away, and I was left alone. Soon I heard a clatter of feet on the stairs, and Mrs. Crossley came into the room. She looked so white and sad, and tears were trickling down her cheeks. She

held open the door for Mr. Crossley, who had little Nina in his arms. Oh! so very white she looked, I was horror-stricken when I saw her. They brought her up to the cribside, and Mr. Crossley gently laid her down: she never spoke or moved at all, but every now and then she moaned. Mr. and Mrs. Crossley both watched beside her, but they would allow no one else in the room. Nina kept like this for some hours. Dr. Thompson came up many times to see her, but looked very grave and sad, and my own heart was ready to break.

At last there came a change. All at once the little patient's eyes opened, and, seeing her mother near her, she said in a faint whisper, 'Mothie, where am I?'

Mrs. Crossley stooped down and with tender love kissed her child.

'You are in mother's room, my dear; you are going to sleep with mother to-night.'

From that time little Nina seemed to get slightly better, and Dr. Thompson held out faint hopes to the poor father and mother that the life of their dear one might be spared.

But for weeks and weeks she lay—at times not knowing at all where she was, or what was going on around her, at other times restless and tossing about night and day: her life hung, as it were, on a thread. All this time Mr. and Mrs. Crossley watched over her without ceasing. Their love for their dear child was so great that they could not bear to be parted.

When Nina was well enough to speak she always asked for her mother, and she never seemed so easy as when her mother was sitting by her holding her hand. It was a time of great trouble to me, for I thought I should really lose my dear one.

Weeks passed without any change, but one morning Dr. Thompson left the room with a more cheerful face than I had ever seen him; and as he was closing the door I heard him whisper to Mr. Crossley, 'Your little one will live now: there is a great change for the better.'

From that day Nina began to improve, and by the end of the week they let Flossy come and see her sister.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE PARTING.



ND so the days and weeks passed away until the hot weather came, but Nina did not get on so well as we all had hoped she would. The heat was very trying to her in her weak state, and she grew so pale and thin. At last Dr. Thompson said they must try what change of air would do for her.

So Mr. Crossley went away to a seaside place in the south of England to look for lodgings, and in a day or two came back with the news that he had found a very nice house and they were all to be ready to start early next week.

None of the children had ever been to the seaside before, and the thought of it made them all very eager to be off.

I shall never forget all Mr. Crossley told the children they would see. 'You will be able to dig on the sands all day long, and watch other children digging too; and when Nina gets a little stronger she will be able to dig too. You can make castles and puddings and cakes and chairs and sofas and all kinds of things, and you can watch the great, big waves dashing against the rocks and see the boats come in laden with fish. Flossy and Daisy may have their shoes and stockings off and wade in the pools of water and pick up seaweeds if mother will let them, and if Nina gets quite strong again she will be able to wade too.' And so he talked on, till really a little colour came into Nina's white face at the thought of going.

All in the house were very busy the next few days packing and getting ready for the journey, and I cannot tell you how pleased I was when I heard Mr. Crossley say to nurse, 'You need not pack Miss Nina's pillow; we

will take it with us as it is: it will be nice for her to rest her head upon in the train.'

It was a great relief to me, for I very much dreaded being parted from my little mistress, of whom I was so very fond.

The morning for setting off came at last, and every one was up very early. Nina seemed very weak and poorly, and laid in bed until nurse came to get her dressed, saying there was only just time to catch the train. And then Mr. Crossley came and lifted his little girl in his arms and took her downstairs. Nurse was just taking me up in her hand when Flossy ran into the room, and called nurse, saying her mother wanted her.

Nurse put me down and went with the child. I heard a great deal of walking about in the hall and then the sound of wheels, which stopped outside the house. Soon I could tell that they were taking the luggage away, but still no one came for me. I heard the servants going downstairs and Daisy's little voice calling out, 'Good-bye! good-bye!' but still I was left. Then I heard the carriage drive

away and the front door shut. Oh, who can tell my sorrow ! I knew now that my darling had gone and no one had thought about me. If I had had the power I would have called for some one to take me, but, you know, little reader, pillows cannot do that ; and so I had to wait with patience and endure my grief.

Later on in the day an old woman came into the room to put things right a little, and seeing me—for I was lying on the sofa, at the foot of Mrs. Crossley's bed, where nurse had left me—she lifted me up, took off my cover, and put me back into the crib ; and in a minute or two she took up a large dust sheet, which she put over me. I was now in such darkness that I could see nothing. I heard her bustling about the room for some time, then, from the sound, I knew she was putting in the shutters and barring them ; and as she left the room I heard the key turn in the lock.

It was in vain I sighed ; no one heard me, no one came near me. Day after day passed and still no change. There I was, left all by myself. The days seemed as long as weeks,

the weeks as long as months, and the months as long as years. How I thought of my little mistress, and longed to be with her! If I could only just see her for a minute I felt I should be happy again. I wondered if she ever thought of me and missed me as I did her. I tried to think what the sands were like that her father had told her she should play upon, and whether she were really any better, and whether they would be coming home again soon.

The pillows in the next bed told me I was very foolish to make such a fuss about being left. They were very glad of the rest they were having, they said, and they thought I was very silly not to be so too. I tried to listen to every sound, in hopes that it might be my dear little mistress coming back again, but still I waited in vain.

At last one day—it must have been more than a year since they left—the key was turned in the lock and I heard sounds of voices in the room, and I soon found out it was Mr. Crossley.

‘We shall not come back and live here for two years, if ever again,’ I heard him say; ‘but

your mistress has written down a list of the things she wants to be sent, and the man will be here in a day or two to pack all up. Miss Nina is so much better, now she has got to Italy, that we intend staying there until she is quite well and strong again.'

How my heart beat when I heard this! and how I hoped that I too was down in the list of the things that were to be sent to them! But, sad to say, it was not to be:

'What about the cribs?' said the woman who took care of the house. 'They will be too small for the children when they come back again if they are going to be away such a long time, and they are not down on the list.'

'Oh, they have got new ones; I forgot to tell you. Your mistress said this one of Miss Nina and Miss Daisy's are to go to the children's hospital.' And having said this they both left the room.

I cannot describe what I felt. It was something to know that Nina was getting better, but the thought of never seeing her again was almost more than I could bear. But after

making myself very unhappy for some time I made up my mind that any change would be better than the lonely life I had been leading lately, and I began to look forward—I think I may say with even some feelings of pleasure—to my new life.

I had no idea what a children's hospital was like, never having seen one in my life; and I made all sorts of guesses.

In a few days' time a man came and packed the crib, rolling me up again in the mattress, and then I knew nothing more until I reached my new abode.



## CHAPTER VII.

### IN THE HOSPITAL.



ON I was set free and found myself in a very large room, much larger than the children's room at Mrs. Crossley's, which I had before thought was so big. It was a very cheerful-looking room, with a great many large windows which let in what sunshine there was; but it was getting cold weather now, and the sun did not shine very much. There was a large fire burning at each end of the room, and in front of each fire was placed a high iron guard.

Down both sides of the room there were rows of little beds, which looked very snug and cosy with their bright red quilts and snow-white

sheets and pillow cases. The walls were all white-washed and there were a great many bright pictures and texts hanging all about. I was placed near the middle of the room, and so had a good view of all around me.

The lady who had helped to unpack the cot looked very kind indeed, and as she told the servant where we were to be placed she took me up and put me in a clean cover. It was not made of muslin this time, and I missed my pink ribbons; but I had grown wiser now, little reader, and was not so vain as I had been before.

When safely settled in the cot I soon found out that there were children in the room, and on looking about I saw that a great many of the beds had inmates. Little, thin, white faces, looking old and careworn before their time, were peeping out from under the cover of the little beds, and one or two little figures were sitting up to see the pretty new cot which had just come.

In a corner of the room near the fire three or four of the little ones, who were well enough to be out of bed, were sitting playing.

It was a sad sight to see so many little wan faces and to think of the pain that it was only too plain some of them must have gone through. There was a very kind-looking woman in the room, as well as the lady who had given orders about the crib, who was dressed in a clean print gown and wore a large cap on her head. The children were all very fond of her and called her nurse; and she seemed to be quite a mother to them all.

The little girl in the next bed to me looked very ill indeed. She was too weak to move at all, and as I watched her I could not help thinking of dear little Nina; and I began to wonder which of these little ones was to take her place.

I was very sorry though, when bedtime came, to find that the crib was still empty, and it was not until a week had passed that I again felt a little head pressed against me.

But I am sure my little readers will like to know something about the little ones whom I saw in the children's hospital when I first went there. I soon learnt a little of their story, and I will tell you it as well as I can.

All the beds in the ward were marked with a number, so I will begin in order and tell you who slept in the first bed.

It was a little girl called Annie Drew. She was only seven years old, and had to lie in bed all day because she had something the matter with her leg, which the doctor said would never be better until she had a long and perfect rest.

Now, no children like having always to lie still, and Annie Drew did not like it at all. And when she saw the other children who were able to run about so happy at their play, she was not so patient as she ought to have been and often spoke crossly to the kind nurse who waited upon her. Her mother used to come and see her once a week, and it grieved her very much to see her little daughter so naughty. She used to cry so for her mother to take her home with her that at last the nurse said that unless she were a wiser little girl, and tried to be more patient, she would have to forbid her mother coming to see her at all.

In bed No. 2 was a tiny little girl only just three years old: her name was Rosie Bell.

She was an orphan and had no kind friends to come and see her. But she was a happy little thing, in spite of all her troubles, and had grown to look upon the hospital quite as her home. She was very thin and wasted, and the doctors gave but slight hopes of her ever living to grow up ; but as long as they could do her any good at all they were going to let her stay. She was a sweet little thing and a pet with all in the ward. She was not always in bed, but was able to run about a little sometimes, and it was a great pleasure to the other children to watch her playing about. But often she had a great deal of pain and had to lie very still.

In bed No. 3 was a bigger child, a girl of ten years old, called Bessie Green. She was not so ill as some of the others, and was very useful in helping sometimes to amuse the little ones. She had a great many little brothers and sisters at home, and I heard her mother telling nurse one day how much they all missed her. It was in saving one of her brothers from being knocked down by a horse that she was hurt ; but she was getting better now, and the doctor

hoped in a week or two she would be quite well again and able to go home. Nurse said she should miss her very much, she was so kind to the little ones and was always thinking how she could please others.

In No. 4 bed was a child very unlike Bessie. She was nine years old and her name was Sarah Smith. She gave more trouble, I often heard nurse say, than any other child in the ward. She had only been in the hospital a day or two when I came, and she had not at all settled down to its orders and rules. It was very easy to see that she had been used to have a great deal of her own way, and to do as she was told was something quite new to her. The doctor said if she was to get any better she *must* keep quiet now, and it took nurse nearly her whole time to make her obey his orders.

‘I don’t like this horrid place,’ she kept crying; ‘I won’t stay here.’ And then she would scream for her mother to fetch her away.

Of course this was very foolish of her, for her mother could not hear, and she would have got better so much more quickly had she been

only patient and done as she was told. It shocked the other children to see her so naughty and made them nearly begin to cry too. And instead of taking her medicine like a good child as soon as it was brought to her she would not have it, and nurse had to be very strict with her and make her *swallow* it.

Of course it was all the more nasty for the fuss that she made over it, and it only made her worse being so naughty.

In the next bed, No. 5, was a little girl called Mary Ross. She looked so very thin and white, and was too ill to move at all; and I saw, when her mother came to see her, the tears were pouring down her cheeks as she left the room. But little Mary was so good and patient and gave no trouble. She took her medicine when it was brought to her without a complaint. Her pain was sometimes very bad, but I never heard her murmur all the time.

Little reader, if you had been in the hospital as I was you must have seen how unlike these two children, Sarah Smith and Mary Ross, were to each other: the one was always cross and

grumbling, the other so good and patient. Sarah Smith was a trouble to all around her; but little Mary, by her patient and gentle ways, made all fond of her. When you are ill, little reader—and I may say when you are well too—which are you like?

I must hasten on to tell you about the other children in the ward. There was Janey Bach, who could not walk at all; but the doctors hoped in time to be able to get her back the use of her legs; and there was Ellen Raynor, who had hurt her head and had to keep very quiet; and Clara Martin, a merry little trot of five years old, who did not appear to have much amiss with her, but the doctors, who are more clever than we are, did not think so well of her; and there was a little girl who always went by the name of Matty: she had only one arm. She had been run over in the street by a heavy cart, and her arm had been so crushed that the doctors had had to cut it off. She was a very little girl, and at first she missed her arm very much and used to cry to have it put on again. But of course this could not be, and by-and-by she

got used to being without it, and soon became as handy and useful as many little girls with two arms.

Last of all there was a tiny little boy only just two years old. He had only been in the ward one day when I got there, and he used to cry a great deal for his mother; but in a few days he was as happy as any of them and quite at home with the kind nurse, who was quite a mother to him.

All the children were very pleased with the cot and kept asking nurse if they might not sleep in it. But nurse could not show favour to one and not the other, and so she would not allow any of them to have it.

‘It is to be kept for the next little child that comes in,’ she said; and it was not many days before she came.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### LITTLE FANNY.



BOUT seven o'clock that night, when the gas had been lighted and all the little ones had been safely tucked up for the night, most of them losing their troubles for a time in sweet sleep, the front door bell rang loudly, as though some one were in a great hurry to get in. Then all was quiet again in the ward where I was for a few minutes, but soon I heard the sound of footsteps on the stairs, for the door had been left open. Then a nurse came in with a large bundle in her arms. She came up to me, and then I saw a tiny little face in the bundle, and

I knew that, after all, I was to have some one to take care of that night. The face was that of a little girl about six years old, and a sweet little face it was.

A poor woman came with the child, and when I looked at her face, and then at the little girl's, I knew they were mother and child; for although one was a face wrinkled and scarred by time and sorrow and the other was the face of an infant they had a wondrous look of each other. Each had the same soft eyes, each the same look of love in those eyes, and, alas! at this moment, the same look of pain. Little children little know how mothers and fathers feel all the pain they suffer. They do not know when father or mother has to punish their little ones that father and mother feel the pain they must give far more than the little ones do. Little children do not know when they cry for trifles, or for nothing, how fathers' and mothers' hearts wring with pain. If they knew it they would not be so troublesome as they are. Yes; there was the same look of pain in the faces of mother and child. It was such

pain that I wished I could see the tears come into the mother's eyes, for I knew that some pain is too great for tears.

I heard the mother tell nurse, as the child had her clothes taken off, how it had happened.

'I had gone on an errand,' she said, 'taking Baby with me, and left Fanny in the house with her little sister, when the kettle, which was on the fire, began to boil over, and Fanny, in trying to take it off, got her frock on fire. Then she dropped the kettle in her fright and the boiling water fell on her legs and feet. The water put out the fire but scalded her, as you see. A neighbour who heard her crying ran in and put flour on the scalded places. The doctor came then and said it was the best thing she could have done, but still the scalds are very bad.'

I believe—indeed I am sure—that those scalds hurt the mother more than they would have done if she had had them herself. Yes; I am sure of it: for she loved her little girl far more than she loved herself.

Just then our kind-hearted doctor came in

to see how the little girl was, now that she was in bed.

He brought something to put on the scalded places and gave her something to drink. Fanny looked at him and then at her mother, and then drank it up. All this time she had hold of her mother's hand. Soon I saw the tears come slowly to the woman's eyes, and I knew at once that she thought her little girl was better.

'Don't leave me, mother! don't leave me!' Fanny said over and over again.

But each time her words became more and more feeble, till she dropped off fast asleep, but still holding her mother's hand.

'I think she will go on nicely now,' said the doctor with a pleasant smile to the mother. 'I expect she will have a good, long sleep after the draught, and I hope when she wakes in the morning she will be more easy and have little or no pain.'

The poor mother could not speak; her heart was too full.

'Come in the morning,' said the nurse.

‘Quiet mothers like you do the children good.’

Soon after this the poor mother left, for she had other children to look after.

Little Fanny slept all the night through, but now and then she moaned and started in her sleep. The nurse, who was always in the room at night, often came to look at her, shading the candle so that the light might not disturb her; and I heard her whisper to herself, as she left the bedside, ‘Poor little lamb! how painful it must be.’ If little Fanny did feel the pain now and then, and did start in her sleep, I think she must have slept better than her mother, who was so anxious about her. I often thought of the poor woman lying awake thinking of her little child, who had never been away from her before.

I don’t think little children are thankful enough for their blessings. When you are ill you have kind friends to take care of you and nurse you at home, and have not to be taken away and left among strangers as little Fanny was. Surely you ought to be very thankful

for all the comforts you have and show how thankful you are by trying to be good and giving as little trouble as you can.

Little Fanny did not wake until late the next morning, and at first she could not make out where she was.

‘Mother! mother!’ she cried, sitting up in bed and looking strangely round her.

Nurse soon saw her and came up to her.

Seeing nurse seemed to recall to her where she was, and she threw herself down upon me and began to cry.

For some time nurse could not comfort her, and she let her have her cry out; but by-and-by her sobs grew fewer, and then nurse talked to her very kindly, and showed her how good the other children were, even tiny little Freddy, who was sitting up in bed chatting away to himself in his baby prattle.

Then nurse got Fanny to let her wash her, saying how pleased her mother would be to see her all tidy and nice when she came. And although the dressing of the scalds was very

painful, yet it all got through with fewer tears than I had looked for.

Nurse asked little Fanny if she were used to saying her prayers, and she said yes. She was troubled because she was not able to get up and kneel by the bedside, but nurse told her as she was not well enough to do it God would hear her just the same; and so she folded her hands and said her prayers lying down in bed.

When she had done this she seemed more happy, and said to nurse: 'Mother will soon be coming to see me now, because I have asked God to send her. It still hurts me, but I will try not to cry when mother is here; it would make her so sorry.'

Then nurse fetched the little girl her breakfast—some nice, warm milk and bread and butter. She drank the milk up very quickly, for she seemed very thirsty, but she did not eat much. Then nurse went to a large drawer at the other end of the room, and brought out a doll—a very pretty one, with long hair, and dressed in a pretty blue frock and cape and hood.

Fanny watched nurse, and when she saw the doll was coming to her a smile came over her face and she held out her arms for it. Her scalds were still very bad, but she was so pleased with the doll that she seemed for the time to forget her troubles.

‘A little girl sent this doll here the other day,’ said nurse, placing the doll in Fanny’s arms. ‘She dressed it herself, and it is to be your own as long as you stay here and are a good girl. It was the same little girl who used to sleep in this little bed where you are, but it was before the bed came here.’

You may be sure that I, the pillow, looked at the doll more than ever now. I wished I could hear more about my little Nina, but I did not.

Poor little Fanny! she was pleased with her new treasure. She laid it in her arms and hushed it to sleep and quite looked upon it as a *real* baby; and when her mother came to see how her little one was getting on, I cannot tell you how pleased she was to see her looking so happy.

She had been very grieved at leaving her child the night before, but now her mind was eased when she saw how much better she seemed.

How I did wish my little Nina, who had dressed the doll, could have seen the pleasure it gave!

Her mother stayed with little Fanny for some time, and she could leave her with much less sorrow now, for the little one had almost forgot the pain in the pleasure the doll gave her; and she told her mother that she would try not to cry again till she came to see her the next day.

‘I know you must go away,’ she said, ‘and I don’t want to keep you from Emma and Baby; I know they will want you. You must not tell them how nice it is here, or perhaps they will want to knock the kettle over too.’ And she laughed quite gaily.

The mother only smiled, but it was a loving and thankful smile.

All the children who were able to be up ut not well enough to leave the room had

their dinners at a large table drawn up by the fire at one end of the room, and very merry they sometimes seemed over it. But Fanny, of course, was not able to sit up, and nurse gave her her dinner in bed.

She could not eat very much, but she tried to take the broth that was brought to her, because nurse told her she would get better so much more quickly if she took her food.

As evening came on she was not so well, and the pain of the burns made her moan a great deal; but she was a brave little girl, and tried hard to keep the promise she had made to her mother. The doctor sent her more medicine, to be taken before night came, and she fell asleep after it, and slept all through the night with the doll fast folded in her arms.

She had to be in bed for a long time, poor little child! Her scalds were very slow in healing, but I don't think I could have had a better little girl to take care of; she was so gentle and patient, very like little Mary Ross, of whom I told you in the last chapter: and I think she

scarcely ever had the doll out of sight all through her illness.

After being in bed so many weeks I cannot tell you how pleased she was when the doctor told nurse one day that she might get up for a little while. It was her mother's day for coming to see her, and nurse said it should be a surprise to her. Fanny was more pleased than ever now, and you may imagine that it was a very great surprise, and a very pleasant surprise, for the mother when she came into the ward. Of course she first looked at the crib, as she always did, but it was empty. Little Fanny was so eager to let her mother see her sitting up again that she called out from the sofa where she was lying near the fire, 'Mother, mother, I am up!'

The mother was more pleased than the child—too pleased to do more than kiss her; and as she was no worse after the first time, nurse let Fanny sit up a little every day. Then she let her walk a little, and after a time Fanny was able to play with the other children. At last one day, when the doctor came into the

ward he said she was well enough to go home again.

The poor little girl was so pleased when she heard him say this that she found it hard to wait for her mother to fetch her. But she was sorry, too, to leave the kind nurse and the other children, and she *was sorry* too, I think, to leave *me*. But the day came for her to go, and she went. But she used often to come back and see nurse, and she always used to come and stand by me and say: 'This is the nice little bed where I was so long, and where all were so kind to me; and this is the nice pillow where I used to rest and sleep and get well. When I get a big girl—a *really* big, grown up girl—I *should* like to come and be a nurse here!'



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE PILLOW'S LAST CHRISTMAS.



HERE were many little children who rested upon me after this, but it will take too long for me to tell you about them all. They were all little girls like Fanny, who, although in great pain, knew they were being well taken care of, and were thankful; and showed their thankfulness by doing what they were told and taking what was given to them, But these good children did not stay so long with me, as a rule, as the others did. For, by being thankful and doing what they were told. they *helped to make themselves well.*

The other kind were little girls who were

peevish, and grumbled and cried when they were told to take this or that, and who were never thankful. They *would* not think that those about them were doing all they could to make them well and happy and cure their pains. They always stayed with me a long time, for, instead of helping to make themselves better, *they helped to make themselves worse.*

I really do not know how old I was, but I was getting old for a pillow, and nurse often looked at me in a way that said, 'We must have a new pillow here soon.' Then I knew I should be pulled to pieces. Perhaps all the eider inside me might go to make a new pillow, or perhaps some of it would go to one pillow and some to another; or perhaps it would all go, with a great deal more, to make a quilt or mattress. At all events I knew that soon there must be a change. But when was it to be? I knew soon.

'After Christmas I must get a new pillow for this crib,' nurse said one day.

'After Christmas!' I thought. I was glad to find that it was not to be until after

Christmas, for they always had a very happy time at Christmas at the hospital.

It came at last, only too quickly for me. The ward was very full—more full than it had ever been at Christmas time since I had been there, for fathers and mothers used to try and have their little ones at home with them at this happy time of the year. But it had been a very severe winter, and there had been a great deal of sickness among children ; and all the beds in the ward were full.

The little girl whom I had to take care of at that time, and the last one who ever rested upon me, was Ada Jordan. She was eight years old, and had fallen down on a slide in the street and broken her leg. She had a great deal of pain in the broken limb and had to keep very quiet.

She had no father, and her mother was very poor indeed. She used to take in plain sewing from one of the large shops in the town, but was very badly paid for what she did, and it was a hard struggle for the poor woman to support herself and her four little ones.

It was a great relief to her when she found she could get her little girl into the hospital, where she had so many more comforts than she would have been able to get for her had she been at home. The soft bed and the nice warm blankets in the crib were a great change from the hard floor she had to lie on at home and the wornout rug, which was the only cover that any of them had. She had plenty of good food now, while at home she had to be content with dry bread, and very little of that too sometimes.

A day or two before Christmas little Fanny, who had now grown into a woman, came to help nurse in her work, and she used to tell the children the story of her younger days and how she was brought to the hospital and laid in the crib Ada was now in.

And nurse would add more and tell the children how good Fanny used to be. They all grew very fond of their new nurse: she was so gentle and kind to them that it made me feel quite proud to think she had ever rested upon me.

But I must hasten on and tell you how the children spent their Christmas. Some of them were not very happy at the thought of being away from home at Christmas, but nurse tried to comfort them by telling them there would be a surprise for them all the next morning, and thinking and guessing what it would be made them, in some measure, forget their trouble.

Each child, when she awoke on Christmas morning, found a present laid all ready for her upon her pillow.

It made me think of the Christmas I had spent with Nina and Flossy as I watched nurse going round with the presents to each little bed, and I wondered what had become of my dear little mistress. Although so many years had passed away since I had seen her I still often thought of her, and I felt as though I should never forget her. She must be a grown up lady, I said to myself, by this time; and I longed to see her again.

When the children woke in the morning they were very much pleased with their presents.



The little ones had toys and dolls and some of the elder girls had more useful presents. One little girl, who was very fond of sewing, got a workbox all ready fitted up with cotton and needles and tape and thimble and scissors. Some had large print Bibles, so that they could read them themselves. Ada had a large book full of Bible pictures.

The poor little thing had never had a book of her own in her life before, and I cannot tell you how pleased she was with it.

But where do you think all these presents came from? I don't think they dropped down from the skies, or came to the hospital without being sent, do you?

Oh no! Could we have peeped into some homes in the town I think we should have found out the secret. Kind, thoughtful little children, who had friends at home to care for them and never knew what want was, had been helping good mothers, elder sisters, and aunts to get all these nice things ready for the little ones less happy than they were. I am sure if they could have seen, as I did, the pleasure they

gave the poor, sick children, and how happy they made their Christmas, they would have been well repaid for all their trouble.

During the morning a kind clergyman came to see the children and spoke to them about Christmas Day: it made me think of Mr. Crossley. He began by telling the children how it was that Christmas was such a happy time.

He said it was, not only the presents that our friends gave us that made it so, although, of course, we all liked to receive presents—it showed us our friends did not forget us; it was not the good things we have to eat at Christmas that make it a happy time: it was the great gift that God had given us on the first Christmas Day—the gift of His own Son—that made all true Christmas joy. Without that great gift nothing could make us happy.

Then he went on to say that all people liked to have a friend—some one to whom they could tell all their troubles and to whom they could always look for counsel and help. And Jesus had been born into this world of ours that He

might be our Friend. Even little children need friends, and Jesus came to be the Friend of little children. He was willing to be the Friend of each little child in that ward, so that each one might feel that He was near to help whenever help was needed.

Then he told the little ones a story about a very rich man who lived in a large, grand house and had plenty of money and plenty of friends, plenty of all that this world could give him, and yet he was not happy. Each Christmas as it came round found him more and more wretched. His friends could not make him happy—nothing seemed to please him.

And why was this? He knew nothing of the only true joy that Christmas brings—that a Saviour had been born into the world; he knew nothing in his heart of the love of Jesus.

Then he told the children a story about a poor little boy who lived in a small, close attic in one of the poorest parts of London; how it was Christmas time and the little boy was very ill indeed. His father was a sailor, and nothing had been heard of him for years, and

his mother was too poor to get him anything to do him good. The only thing she had in the house was dry bread, which he was too ill to eat.

It was very cold weather, and on Christmas morning, when the poor widow got out of bed, the tears rolled down her cheeks as she heard the merry Christmas bells ringing and saw her little boy in such pain and want.

But the little fellow had heard about Jesus and had learnt to love Him, so that when he saw his mother's tears he said, trying to cheer her: 'O mother, do not weep for me. I am happy, quite happy, without the good things you would like me to have. It is Jesu's birthday, and it is that which makes me happy; He has done so much for me. And when I think about Him, as I hear those bells ringing, it makes me, oh, so happy!'

Then the clergyman spoke so nicely to the children and asked them if *they* were happy, really happy, in their hearts; and as I looked round the room I saw the children were all very quiet and still and were thinking about

what they were hearing, and I am sure they would not soon forget it.

And before he went away the kind clergyman gave each little child a bright little piece of silver, which he said a lady had sent for them. I need not tell you how pleased they were with it. Some of the children had never had so much that they could call their own before and they kept putting them under their pillows and taking them out to see if they were all safe. Little Ada kept turning me up and down to look at her treasure.

Then there was such a good dinner—hot roast beef with mashed potatoes steaming hot, and each child who was well enough to care for it had a taste of plumpudding; and after dinner there was a nice orange for each child.

After this all was quiet in the ward for a little time, while the sick children rested, and then the parents and friends of the little ones came to see them; and they were all so happy showing the nice presents given to them.

And others came too to see them besides the children's parents—kind ladies, who came

to try and amuse the little ones and sing pretty Christmas carols to them.

All at once as I was watching little Ada showing her presents to her mother I was startled by hearing a voice which was familiar to me. I looked at once to see who it was. Two ladies and a little girl had come into the room ; and who do you think one of the ladies was ? My little Nina ! Though so many years had passed away I knew her again at once. Yes ; there could be no mistake about it. The eyes were the very same that I had seen peeping at me through the shop window. She looked sweeter than ever and her face was full of kindness. She went up to each of the little beds in the room and spoke so kindly to the little children ; and when she came up to my crib she said to the little girl who was with her, ' This is the crib I have often told you about, Mina darling ; the very same that I used to sleep in when I was a little girl. I have often thought about it. I was just your age, Mina, when I got it ; and I used to be so fond of it. And the pillow used to have a muslin cover

with pink ribbons, but I suppose that is worn out now. It used to be so soft too. I wonder if this is the same.' And as she spoke she laid her hand upon me; but I am afraid I did not feel so soft as I had once been. How I longed to speak and tell her how I was!

Then she began to talk so kindly to little Ada and her mother. The child was not at all shy with her—indeed, no one could have been afraid of her. And then the other lady came up to the crib too. I did not know her at first, but little Mina, who was just like what Nina used to be, ran up to her and said, 'Aunt Florence, this is the bed mamma used to sleep in when she was a little girl like me.'

Then I knew it was Flossy of the olden days grown up to be a lady too. Soon after this the kind clergyman, who had been to see us in the morning, came again, and as soon as little Mina saw him she ran up to him crying, 'Papa, come and see the bed where mamma used to sleep when she was a little girl!'

He came to us all and seemed as pleased as his little girl had been. And Fanny, who

was standing near, smiled all over her face when she heard what they said. And Miss Nina—no; not Miss Nina now, but Mrs. Hogarth—began to talk to her. And Fanny told her how she too had slept in the crib and how pleased she had been with the doll that Nina had sent to the hospital; and she added more, and said that it was being so happy as a child in the hospital that made her wish when she was a woman to come and help nurse to take care of the sick little ones.

Some very pretty Christmas carols were sung and then a large box was brought into the room. It was taken round—first to the bedside of those who were not well enough to be up and then to the little ones who were able to play about, and each child put in her hand and drew out some present.

The children's friends stayed and had tea with them; Mr. and Mrs. Hogarth and little Mina stayed too. I hardly took my eyes off my dear mistress all the evening, and long after all the little ones had been tucked up for the night I lay awake, too happy to sleep.

And now, little reader, the pillow's story is ended. A few days after this happy Christmas nurse came with her large scissors, and in a very short time a new pillow was put into the crib and the old pillow that has been telling you its story was no longer a pillow. But its story will not have been written in vain if it has taught any little one to think for others. Let us each try, not to spend the life God has given us simply in trying to please ourselves, but let us all try to do what we can to help those around us. You who have little brothers and sisters at home, try to be kind and gentle and loving, willing to give up your own will sometimes to please them. And see also if, like little Nina and Flossy, there is nothing you can do for the poor, homeless little ones who have no kind friends to look after and care for them as you have; striving in all things to walk in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ, who spent His time on earth going *about doing good*.

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